



ORGANIZING A TOWN HALL MEETING

First Steps

First, you should decide what kind of Town Hall Meeting to have. This decision will depend on how large and complex an event you want to hold. The following are three examples to help you make that decision. Please note that these are just examples—the activities are interchangeable. You might want to include or omit certain activities mentioned here.

Sample Events

Simple event:

- Combine your meeting with a community event such as a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meeting.
- Include adults and/or youth.
- Hold the event in a school gymnasium or auditorium.
- Limit the event to an hour or an hour and a half.
- Prepare a media advisory or news release to encourage media coverage.
- Involve mayors and other public officials, police and health representatives, and faith-based organizations.

Intermediate event:

- Combine the meeting with another community event or make the meeting a separate event. The meeting can be held in a school gymnasium or in another location or facility such as a restaurant, local library, or alcohol and drug information resource center.
- Invite key community officials, such as mayors and law enforcement representatives.
- Use the media kit as a guide to help reach out to the media and encourage news coverage.
- Involve mayors and other public officials, police and health representatives, and faith-based organizations.

Complex event:

- Make the meeting a separate event, possibly in a hotel ballroom, school auditorium, local library meeting room, or alcohol and drug information resource center.
- Prepare printed and/or electronic flyers or mailings to reach out to the entire community.
- Use the media kit as a guide to help reach out to the media and encourage news coverage.
- Videotape the meeting.
- Involve mayors and other public officials, police and health representatives, and faith-based organizations.
- Prepare handouts for meeting participants.
- Offer snacks or light refreshments.
- Plan follow-up meeting to discuss lessons learned and results.
- Organize a post-meeting reception.
- Identify and network with opinion leaders to further disseminate information.
- Discuss a possible community plan and how it might roll out.